

Council on Physical Therapy of the American Medical Association.

A paper on "Progress in Physical Therapy" was read before the industrial section at the annual meeting of the California Medical Association. An educational film was also shown.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The committee recommends a program for a half-day session on physical therapy at the next annual meeting of the California Medical Association. This is not to be regarded as a request for a special section, but as a method of spreading further information among general practitioners in order to get a more rational view of the indications and limitations of physical therapeutic measures. The committee hopes presently to be able to offer to the profession free instruction on courses in physical therapy. We will have available a list of accredited institutions which offer graduate and postgraduate instruction.

PLANS FOR THE FUTURE

At the 1933 Del Monte meeting of the California Medical Association, it was considered advisable to wait until fall before starting on an active educational campaign.

Our first step will be to again contact the medical societies which have not appointed committees, and to cooperate with such committees as have been appointed. Cooperation would include:

1. Making a more detailed survey of hospitals and institutions practicing physical therapy; under whose direction the work is being carried on; qualifications of technicians and physicians; equipment; and details of any graduate or post-graduate instruction given.

2. To promote the teaching of physical therapy to graduates and undergraduates in medical schools and hospitals; to make a survey of such schools and to ascertain in writing their curriculum requirements for admission, the number of students graduated each year and whether or not diplomas are given; and to secure the cooperation of manufacturers and distributors, in an effort to do away with commercial courses.

3. To ascertain the number of regular and irregular establishments offering some form of physical therapy treatment to the public, and under what authority they operate.

4. To encourage the presentation of papers on physical therapy subjects at meetings of state, county and city medical societies, and at hospital-staff meetings.

5. To see that physical therapy literature and books are obtainable in medical and hospital libraries, including such works as: "Handbook of Physical Therapy," published by the American Medical Association; "Principles and Practice of Physical Therapy," three volumes, loose-leaf set, edited by Doctors Pemberton, Mock, and Coulter, published by W. F. Pryor & Company; "Electrotherapy and Light Therapy," edited by Dr. Richard Kovacs, New York City, published by Lea & Febiger, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; "Textbook of Physical Therapy" by Doctor Wolf, published by D. Appleton Century Company, Inc.; "Archives

of Physical Therapy, X-Ray, and Radium," a monthly publication, the cost of which is \$5 per year; address, 30 North Michigan Avenue, Chicago, Illinois.

Shortly after the appointment of the California State Committee, the Western Division of the American Physiotherapy Association, and Association of Technicians (including San Francisco, Los Angeles, Washington, and Oregon chapters) appointed contact representatives to act with the Committee on Physical Therapy of the California Medical Association. The sole purpose of this conjoint committee is to gather such information as organized medicine may call for at any time in relation to technicians of physiotherapy in the state.

It is a working committee, representing the entire Pacific Coast, and has seven members. These and similar groups, if there are any, should be a valuable asset to scientific physical therapy.

COMMENT

There are only two state committees in physical therapy in the whole United States—one on the eastern coast, the other on the Pacific Coast. How can physical therapy get adequate recognition unless more state committees are formed? It would aid greatly if at least one-half of the states had well organized, functioning committees. As soon as the medical profession understands that we are not merely trying to promote physical therapy, but are seeking to regulate its practice and turn the tide into legitimate channels, there should be no difficulty getting committees organized. Then on the day before each annual meeting of the various state medical societies, and while working in conjunction with the plan of the American Congress of Physical Therapy, we could have presented both constructive and instructive physical therapy programs.

REFLECTIONS CONCERNING NEUROPSYCHIATRY*

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WE are living in a time of the greatest scientific activity which the world has ever seen, and also in one of greatest uncertainty and unrest. The changed and changing views and attitudes of the people in all countries have not failed to profoundly affect medicine, notably neurology and psychiatry.

PSYCHOPATHIC REACTIONS TO MODERN CIVILIZATION

The social and political situations, and especially the influence of our mechanized civilization and crowding in large cities, with their hurry, excitements and dissipations, have proved intensely neuroticizing, as shown not only in actual nervous disease but also in the psychopathic reaction forms which complicate the picture in various illnesses.

* Chairman's address, Neuropsychiatry Section of the California Medical Association at the sixty-second annual session at Del Monte, April 24-27, 1933.

New inventions, while greatly adding to our power to combat unfavorable natural conditions, enormously facilitating our mobility and furnishing material comforts hitherto unknown, have made on the debit side a vast increase in accidental deaths and injuries, followed by prolonged permanent incapacity in which trauma to the nervous system, physical and psychic, plays an important part.

EFFECTS OF SOME MODERN THERAPEUTIC AGENTS

The application to medicine of forces previously beyond our control is showing that they possess also unsuspected disease-producing potentialities. We are encountering new forms of poisoning while the malign power of radium and x-rays, when improperly applied, and the lesser dangers of light therapy and diathermy, emphasize the necessity for knowledge and caution upon the part of those using them. In this connection we must consider the possibility of ill effects yet unknown from the development of still other forces.

The increased ease and rapidity of travel by land, sea and air which have brought nearly the whole world into closer contact, is serving also to distribute noxious agents previously localized, and we are getting acquainted with diseases formerly unfamiliar but now becoming pandemic.

Since the nervous system is the most highly organized and vulnerable of structures, the above considerations possess a special importance for those of us who are occupied with its diseases. We cannot turn backward, neither would anyone wish to surrender our great practical gains; rather, must we be prepared to utilize these and more to come, being ever on the lookout for possible ill effects, and prepared to combat them.

INTELLECTUAL CAPACITY OF MODERN MAN

It is the opinion of those best qualified to express themselves that, in his intellectual capacity, man has not advanced beyond the ancient Greeks, whose thought was of the highest. Much as we excel our ancestors in practical gains, amid the multiform activities of modern life, there seems to be little time left for thinking. Again, in our population, the people incapable of this exercise seem to increase out of proportion to those so capable. It appears that the much vaunted "birth control" appeals mainly to the capable.

DEFICIENCIES IN MODERN EDUCATIONAL METHODS

Our great American ideal of universal education is being found to have its limits, and vast sums of money are being wasted in trying to give higher education to those essentially uneducable.

Medicine has come to contain so much that no one mind can compass all its material. A present problem is how to prevent further overloading of the medical course, while conveying to the student sufficient theoretical and practical knowledge to fit him to enter upon general practice after its completion and at least a year's experience as a hospital interne. To do this the specialties will

have to be consolidated, perhaps pared, unless the period of undergraduate study is lengthened. If paring is to be done, the neuropsychiatric goat is likely to be the sacrificial animal.

No one need too highly exalt his own specialty, since all are included under medicine and surgery. Specialties are properly postgraduate studies, and are best approached after a preliminary experience in general practice.

PLACE OF NEUROPSYCHIATRY IN THE MEDICAL CURRICULUM

However, we can rightly insist that the principles of neurology, medical psychology and psychiatry should be taught in the medical course, and that adequate clinical instruction be given in the senior year and during the hospital service. A large public hospital having a psychiatric department can furnish adequate material; but if mental diseases are not represented there, a short internship in a state hospital should be required. The above should suffice to inculcate at least a proper viewpoint as to neuropsychiatry, a thing which most physicians now in practice do not seem to have obtained.

Neurology and psychiatry require a general and professional culture far beyond the average. The latter in particular presupposes an acquaintance with many subjects not strictly medical. Not the least service of the psychoanalytic school has been its encouragement of literary and anthropological studies.

Neurology and psychiatry are in the nature of things inseparable. Only he who is proficient in both disciplines can call himself "Neuropsychiatrist." Our specialties are up to date and ready to utilize all proved advances in medicine.

PRESENT KNOWLEDGE OF THE MIND IS FRAGMENTARY

Since our actual knowledge of the mind is only fragmentary, psychiatry is still largely empirical. Nevertheless it is striving mightily. It was not until physicians entered the field that psychology began to be applied practically. It has never lacked hypotheses and we must still live along with many, which little appeal to the medically trained. It is chiefly through the genius of Freud that it has ceased to be static and has become dynamic.

DYNAMIC NATURE OF FREUD'S TEACHINGS

We must remember that Freud deals with hypotheses hardly susceptible of exact proof, but many of his ideas fit in well with our experience and better explain certain mental symptoms than anything which we had before his time. While the most experienced psychiatrists hesitate to accept his views in their entirety, regarding him as too dogmatic and greatly exaggerating the sexual element, we owe him a great debt for his psychoanalytic method and its stimulating effect upon the more intimate investigation of mental phenomena.

The psychobiological method most closely approximates that of the exact sciences, and best appeals to the medically educated. This, while

using primarily neurophysiology and pathology, anthropology and folklore, finds also a place for the Freudians, the "Gestalt" psychologists, the associationists and the behaviorists, and is attempting to combine these elements into a medical psychology which can be accepted by all physicians.

MENTAL HYGIENE

Extramural psychiatry in the form of mental hygiene has become an important part of our specialty and cannot be neglected. This started as a layman's movement, much of its work must be done by people without medical education; and unfortunately there is in some quarters a tendency to minimize the importance to it of the physician. If it is to exert the beneficent influence possible, its working must be kept strictly under medical influence. Only the trained physician can compass its scientific problems and restrain the overexuberant zeal of lay enthusiasts. To do this he must himself be able to keep his feet on the ground, and to discourage the meddlesome busybodies who are too prone to see, in natural childish manifestations and pranks, the working of some terrible complex and the beginning of a career of crime, and to invoke the law rather than to advise normal parental discipline. He must also be able to foresee and discourage the waste of people's money in unnecessary and futile "surveys" and other impracticable projects. Mental hygiene should investigate, consider and educate, with tact and avoidance of brusque collision with popular prejudices.

ANTAGONISM TO PHYSICIANS

Of recent decades there has arisen in the popular mind a certain distrust, even hostility to physicians. This is fostered, of course, by quacks, faddists and half-educated people. However, it has also been furthered by the fact that too many of the regular medical profession, having become infected by the prevailing idea that success is measured by money-getting capacity alone, have been trying to exact fees disproportionate to the financial situation of the patient. This abuse, however, has been little prevalent in neuropsychiatry, notoriously the least lucrative of specialties. It is fortunate that so many of our number are engaged in public work which affords at least a modicum of compensation.

Unfavorable financial conditions have combined with popular disfavor and an overcrowded profession to bring about our present unhappy situation. Measures to relieve the last cause have already been initiated, and it is hoped that they will improve the quality while diminishing the quantity of the medical output. However, considerable time must elapse before they can afford much relief.

MEDICAL PROFESSION MUST STUDY ITS SOCIO-ECONOMIC PROBLEMS

The recommendations of the majority of the "Committee on the Costs of Medical Care" are not satisfactory to the medical profession as a

whole, and it is plain that we must take more active steps to protect our interests and not supinely accept just what is doled out to us. In this our group must unite with the others. Physicians have been too indifferent to what goes on in Congress, state legislatures and local governing bodies. Only votes affect politicians, and while we have been looking askance at so-called "political doctors," to protect their interests, physicians must take a more active part in politics. When our medical associations can emphasize their just demands by showing that they can control a block of votes, some attention will be paid to them. In other countries prominent physicians sit in both upper and lower parliamentary bodies. Few do in the United States. To the few medical men in Congress we owe such crumbs as have been cast to us. More should be willing to serve, even at some personal sacrifice.

NEUROPSYCHIATRY AND OUR LAWS AND INSTITUTIONS

Upon no branch of medicine does the hand of the law rest so heavily as upon neuropsychiatry, and we are particularly dependent upon the laws affecting the insane and the incompetent. In California these laws are still far from satisfactory. If we can convince our Association of the importance of this matter and it will exert all its influence, we should be able to secure such improvement as to bring this state into line with the progressive eastern commonwealths.

Our state hospitals are greatly overcrowded, and while a former legislature provided for a new institution in the south, its location and construction have been unduly delayed. Encouraging rather than discouraging private institutions for mental patients would save money for the state, and would be responsive to the wishes of their relatives and physicians.

The Department of Institutions, while safeguarding the care of these unfortunates, should not demand so costly an equipment as to make it impossible to keep them at moderate rates. It should also protect licensed institutions from the persecutions of petty local boards and associations, which have been all too common. The neuropsychiatric profession should be represented in this department by one of its trusted members.

SCANDAL OF EXPERT TESTIMONY

The scandal of expert testimony is of legal rather than of medical origin, but it cannot be terminated until all reputable psychiatrists refuse to enter criminal cases, except as impartial experts appointed by the court, as recommended by the American Psychiatric Association and the Bar Association.

We have a right to demand satisfactory qualifications of those who would practice neuropsychiatry, and it is our duty as a section of the California Medical Association to further the movement to establish professional standards for all specialties, and to eliminate as far as possible pseudo specialists.

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